

Goal IV: Create and Communicate Positive City Image

Objective 1

Partner with local school districts to promote achievements

Objective 2

Highlight strong neighborhoods and other benefits of living in Arlington

Objective 3

Build upon existing positive relationships with Arlington real estate and financial industries

Maintaining a positive city image is imperative to attracting businesses and residents alike; and marketing a positive image takes time and consistency. We must get our strong neighborhoods story out to the market. The City already has excellent public park facilities and libraries, as well as a fine variety of retail shopping, entertainment and recreational venues. Improved marketing to let the public know that these exist, and improved promotion of Arlington's public education achievements and the benefits of the City's location in the center of the Metroplex position Arlington as a highly desirable community in which to live, work, learn and play.

One of the areas that Arlington can build on is its school districts. Two high schools in Arlington ISD have been selected as International Baccalaureate World Schools. This is an honor that only 56 schools in Texas and just over 2,000 schools

worldwide have received. Unfortunately, this is not a well known fact. Objective One discusses ways to partner with local school districts to promote the strengths and successes of Arlington schools. Potential means of doing this are through education funds, communication and collaboration with school superintendents and principals, and incentives to attract quality teachers and staff to Arlington schools. This objective also includes building upon the strong relationship and partnership with the University of Texas at Arlington, Tarrant County College, and private schools.

Objective Two highlights additional reasons why Arlington is a great place to live that should be used to promote the City to future and current homeowners. These highlights include low homeowner insurance rates, convenient location for commuting between Dallas and Fort Worth, opportunities to explore

the arts through museums and theater, and Arlington's proximity to major highways, the DFW Airport, sports and recreational venues and quality shopping at new and existing trendy hotspots (such as Arlington Highlands, Lincoln Square and Glorypark.)

Objective Three focuses on strengthening the existing positive relationship with the real estate and banking industry, so that the City of Arlington is seen as one of the best places to reside in the Metroplex. One way to accomplish this is by promoting homeownership through the Arlington Board of Realtor's and seeking to showcase Arlington neighborhoods in the Greater Fort Worth Builders Association's Kaleidoscope of Homes. We must create numerous opportunities to show our appreciation to and draw in involvement from individuals in the real estate and banking industry to highlight existing selling points and create others.

Potential Implementation Tools

- Establish Chapter 380 Program for Rehabilitation and Redevelopment
- Neighborhood Plans
- Public Improvement Districts
- CDBG, HOME, Section 108, Good Neighbor Program 203K
- Updated Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Rules
- Trust for Public Land
- Arlington Housing Finance Corporation and/or Arlington Redevelopment Corporation
 - Maintain mortgage assistance efforts
 - Investigate initiating land bank efforts targeted at preserving neighborhood integrity during a foreclosure crisis
 - Consider redevelopment in targeted areas
- Establish Redevelopment Fund to complement Existing Preservation Funds
 - Lead and asbestos abatement, demolition
 - Property maintenance
- Arlington Housing Authority
 - Maintain existing Section 8 tenant-based services
 - Maintain existing policy of not creating or supporting project-based services except for care to the elderly and disabled
 - Consider CHDO Certification
- Consider Supporting Applications for Housing Tax Credits for New Development (if for redevelopment)
- Do Not Support Applications for Housing Tax Credits for Rehabilitation
- Support New Market Tax Credit Applications

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This strategy is an outgrowth of organization and community work on the following City Council outcomes and priorities:

- The City provides a balance between residential and commercial development and redevelopment that results in improved quality of life and a favorable business climate
- Arlington is a recognized leader of creative and effective economic development policies and practices

Objective 1

Increase curb appeal

Objective 2

Encourage preservation in established communities

Objective 3

Proactive code compliance

Objective 4

Connect Comprehensive and Consolidated Planning

Objective 5

Collaborate with residents

Housing & Redevelopment

Introduction Housing is, by far, the single largest land use in Arlington. For families, it is the most common form of wealth generation. The economic health of our city and the personal wealth of our residents demand new perspectives as we begin to reshape how the market for new development has historically defined our city. While maintaining our commitment to affirmatively furthering fair housing, the City must closely monitor housing market data and develop strategies to address the community and economic development challenges we face today. Consistent with our Champion Arlington Strategy, the future of our economic development success will depend less upon incentive policies and more upon our achievement within neighborhoods.

Arlington has displayed consistent growth in recent years; and in 2005, the city's population was estimated to be 362,972, a 9% increase from 2000. The population is spread throughout the City, with the heaviest concentrations in the West and East Sectors. However, the sector displaying the greatest increase in growth is the southeast sector, adding 1,054 housing units and 2,667 residents in 2005. This is primarily because most of Arlington's remaining vacant land is in the Southeast and Southwest Sectors. Arlington's nearly built-out status is one of the biggest challenges restricting options for new housing development. Another challenge the City faces is the age of existing housing. The majority of the older homes, built between 1950 and 1969, are located in the Central and East Sectors.

According to Money Magazine, in 2006, Arlington's median family income was \$66,177, and the median home price was \$158,872. The median family income is on the low end of the spectrum in the Metroplex, and the median home price is one of the lowest in the Metroplex. Despite affordable housing prices, the homeownership rate in Arlington is only 55%, which is below average for the area. Also, Arlington does not have enough high-amenity housing to meet the needs of the upper-income residents who are living here. The majority of upper income residents in the City are living in housing priced well below their means.

During the 1980s, builders began to focus on developing more entry-level housing, particularly in "older suburbs" like Arlington, quickly establishing entry-level

housing as the predominant building type, (which remains the case today.) This was further accentuated as renters, transitioning into home ownership, purchased entry-level housing. Arlington has the third-highest percentage of multi-family units in Tarrant County. Also, while small lots do not necessarily need to have entry-level housing, this has generally been the case so far in Arlington with the significant use of R1 and R2 zoning, (especially in the Southeast Sector.) Each of these factors contributes to the positive fact that Arlington remains one of the most affordable cities in the state, in terms of homeownership. Collectively, though, the unusual strength of the preceding factors and the limited number of large, vacant residential areas in the City contribute to the limited diversity of housing options.

Goal I: Preserve and Enhance Quality Neighborhoods

Goal I focuses on creating consistent quality of place within the city's housing market.

Objective One seeks to promote attractive housing with curb appeal. Housing will retain its value and marketability through development of appropriate residential design standards for new and infill development. Additionally, broadening housing rehabilitation efforts through the creation of a Chapter 380 program would provide an incentive for homeowners to visibly improve the exterior and energy efficiency of their homes.

Numerous neighborhoods in Arlington have withstood the test of time and demonstrated their sustainability. Stability and cohesiveness are frequently cited as being very important factors for healthy neighborhoods.

Objective Two encourages preservation in established communities by facilitating the use of neighborhood plans, conservation districts, historic preservation, and infill development that is consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

Objective Three retains the City's aggressive code compliance activity to maintain property appearances by seeking compliance with City ordinances relating to maintenance, sanitation, rehabilitation, conservation and safety. Further efforts, such as the development of community court and prosecutors, would build upon the city's capacity to advance abatement of dangerous and substandard buildings, and nuisances; as well as certificate of occupancy verification, etc. Our purpose would be to facilitate property owners' decision making to invest or divest.

The City has numerous planning documents that provide policy direction regarding various business segments such as airport operations, solid waste management, parks and recreation, etc. **Objective Four** anticipates creating a strong linkage between the City's Comprehensive Plan goals and all of our other adopted plans, particularly our most significant housing policy document, the Consolidated Plan for use of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funds. While federal programs must meet certain mandated

requirements, program rules also provide enough flexibility to meet City objectives. Increased alignment of using federal and state programs to meet specific City objectives – not developer priorities - must be attained. Such priorities need not include new housing development, but rather may be used to provide amenities to existing developments (such as park, street, or drainage improvements.)

Objective Five anticipates deepened collaboration with community residents. The heart of neighborhood pride and identity is foremost within its residents rather than in its structures. The foundation of leadership development through the Neighborhood Academy and Summit must be built upon by expanding the Neighborhood Network, number of adopted neighborhood plans, and supporting the initial development of an alliance(s) of neighborhoods.

Goal II: Encourage Range of Housing Products

Objective 1

Increase choices for high amenity housing

Objective 2

Develop residential design standards for new development

Objective 3

Improve the quality of existing multifamily product

Objective 4

Support the market in driving redevelopment

Objective 5

Encourage increased housing density and mixed-use in targeted areas

Objective 6

Maintain existing tenant-based, mixed-income housing for qualifying residents

"We shape our buildings, then our buildings shape us."

-Winston Churchill



Goal 2 seeks to diversify housing products. Housing choices can come in many flavors: estates, zero lot lines, urban, rural, single family, multifamily, energy efficient, varied price points, etc. While choices exist today in Arlington, they are limited and have, until recently, historically been concentrated within a certain product style until. In recent months, zoning efforts within the large tract areas of Tierra Verde, Glorypark, and Viridian have set a new expectation for the quality and amenities of future residential development. Within our 100 square miles, providing a choice of quality housing options will be a primary goal.

Objective One is to increase choices for high amenity housing to appeal to a growing market of users already residing in Arlington and to attract a greater number of these households, as well as the "creative class" to our city. Location is, and will always be, our great asset for attracting investment. New shopping and entertainment development in Arlington will provide certain lifestyle amenities for certain segments. However, significant additional efforts for furthering educational outcomes, parks and open spaces, corridor development, traffic calming, etc. are necessary to attract and retain residents.

Objective Two seeks to create diversity through the

development of residential design standards while still providing developer flexibility to respond to market demands. Standards would allow mixed use development in appropriate areas to promote the goal of working, living and playing all in the same location. Additionally, mixed-income developments also speak to assimilating various socioeconomic levels while maintaining a sense of community. In achieving these objectives, the City should consider targeting specific areas for redevelopment and incorporating into the future land use plan.

Objective Three addresses improving the existing multifamily housing stock while seeking to limit the development of new multifamily units into targeted areas such as Lamar-Collins, Glorypark, and downtown. The City should continue to evolve the multifamily inspection scoring system to facilitate consumer information in making housing choices. New mixed-use multifamily products should be limited to target areas. Transfer of certain development rights and incentives to encourage existing multifamily zoning, (not in target areas) to be utilized for commercial or other residential development should be explored.

The market for redevelopment projects is just beginning to ripen in Arlington. **Objective Four**



encourages policy development and incentives to support the market in driving residential and corridor redevelopment. The development of a tiered Chapter 380 Redevelopment Program would provide tax and/or city service rebates as an incentive to achieve certain levels of added tax value being created on a parcel. Of course, higher incentives could be created for redevelopment tracts as opposed to substantial rehabilitation. To complement neighborhood preservation efforts, redevelopment incentives should be targeted at fragile areas to reclaim progress lost where the tipping point has been crossed.

Consistent with themes established in Lamar-Collins and downtown, **Objective Five** would allow increased housing density and mixed use in selected areas as an incentive to drive investor interest. Not appropriate for the whole city, this product type inherently creates diversity of style, use, and incomes while maintaining a sense of community.

Objective Six maintains existing continuum of care for tenant-based and mixed-income housing activities for qualifying residents at existing levels. In recent years, federal and state funds have remained level to modestly declining. While needs assessments have consistently demonstrated housing shortages at this end of the income range, it is clear that adequate product choices exist within the community. Instead of prioritizing new housing product and resource development, focused attention should be placed on self-sufficiency efforts through improved health, employment, wages, financial counseling, etc. While approximately 40% of qualifying residents will never be able to be self-sufficient because of age and/or disability, many residents possess the motivation and ability to improve their situation by appropriately utilizing the capable health and human services safety net that exists in Arlington.

Goal III: Increase Homeownership and Multifamily Occupancy

Objective 1

Target use of existing home ownership programs

Objective 2

Encourage graduates of UTA to live and work in Arlington

Objective 3

Foreclosure assistance support

Objective 4

Seek voluntary deed restrictions that encourage homeownership

Objective 5

Create rental property management standards

Goal III concentrates on maintaining and increasing home ownership in Arlington through various means: homeownership assistance programs, conversion of rental properties to owner-occupied housing, and incentives to retain UTA graduates in Arlington. It also addresses pressing needs for foreclosure assistance support and rental property management standards.

Objective One focuses on the continued use of existing homeownership programs for qualifying residents. The Arlington Homebuyer's Assistance Program and the Housing Finance Corporation Mortgage Bond Program assist qualified residents with closing costs, down-payment assistance and reduced mortgage rates. Marketing and assistance levels should encourage the conversion of rental property to owner occupied properties.

Objective Two creates linkage with UTA and other government entities to promote homeownership by extending homebuyer assistance to UTA graduates and staff, as well as public/private school teachers and

staff. This initiative would target marketing of homeownership opportunities to new graduates and educational professionals to capture and retain professional role models in our neighborhoods.

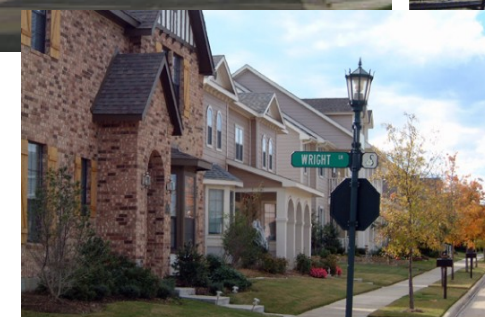
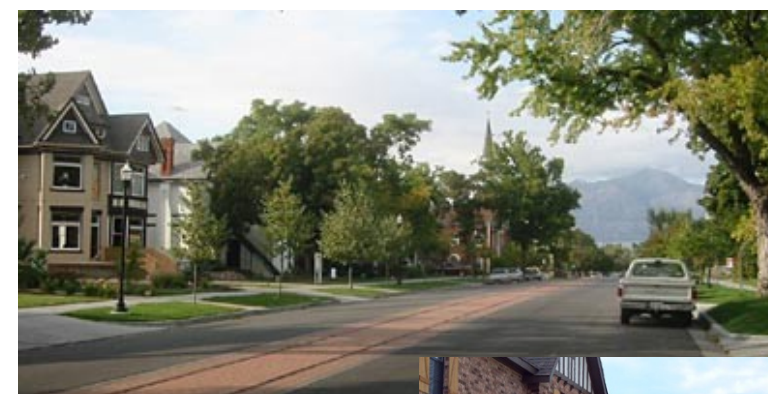
Objective Three encompasses the need to maintain a healthy owner-occupancy rate in the city. Establishing linkages to foreclosure support programs will help maintain ownership and condition neighborhoods for sustainability. As the Fort Worth/ Arlington MSA is currently ranked 13th in the nation for home foreclosures, establishing this linkage is a necessity. The development of a best practice partnership with the Housing Finance Corporation, lenders and taxing jurisdictions to establish a residential land bank that will stabilize ownership, occupancy, and values warrants additional consideration.

Objective Four seeks to establish voluntary deed restrictions that encourage homeownership. While difficult to enforce via third party contracts, this policy establishes the early expectations for the

neighborhood and provides motivation to the neighborhood organization to preserve what was initially established.

Objective Five establishes new ground in creating rental property management standards within the city. Recognizing that past efforts focused upon building codes have not fully achieved desired results, this objective seeks to cooperatively develop a new level of expectation with industry partners. Existing City efforts have focused on code and physical conditions, while relying upon owners and managers to run quality maintenance and tenant screening processes. While many properties do, equal amounts do not. This objective would seek to establish objective screening requirements, such as credit and criminal background checks, give consideration to certain required amenities such as security, homework centers, etc.

"Home is the most popular, and will be the most enduring, of all earthly establishments" Channing Pollock



"A house is a home when it shelters the body and comforts the soul."

-Phillip Moffitt